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SOURCE Vatan.SURVEY OF TURKEY'S EDIRNE PROVINCE

[The following report is one of a series of surveys of Turkish provinces published in a special weekly supplement of the Istanbul daily newspaper Vatan.]

Economic

Having experienced the Balkan Wars and the War for Independence, the people of Edirne were plunged into a panic when the area was designated a defense area in 1941. Property was sold for whatever it would bring. Then followed a 3-year period of floods, droughts, and violent winters. Since then, Edirne has slowly been recovering. For example, the province's population increased by 23,000 between 1945 and 1950.

The most encouraging development is the success achieved in growing cotton. Production began in 1951 in the area south of the Ergene River, where between 200 and 250 tons of high-grade cotton was raised. Production in 1952 is expected to be three times as much. Land fertility will be maintained by growing cotton and sugar beets alternately. In 1951, the yield was 18 tons of cotton per donum. At present, the area has one cotton gin, but this number is expected to be increased as production increases.

Another promising field for economic development is the large lignite deposits in the Omerbey and Maksutlu subdistricts, east of the Uzunkopru-Kesan road, currently in the hands of private enterprise.

The province produces all types of grains plus a large amount of sugar beets. Rice is grown on the Ipsala Plain. In this connection, it might be mentioned that malaria has virtually been eliminated. Uzunkopru is the country's largest producer of sunflower seeds. Production of silk cocoons, once a major occupation, has fallen off but is now regaining its former position.

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Over-all development is felt to be dependent on cooperation of government and private enterprise and on the assuring of credit to private enterprise. There are seven specific fields to consider in this connection:

1. The rapid mechanization of agriculture requires an increase in facilities for repair and maintenance.
2. The Agriculture Ministry must help farmers secure good quality seed cotton, must instruct them in the proper methods of growing cotton, and must carry on agricultural pest control work.
3. Cheap and good seed should be provided by the Soil Products Office.
4. A canning factory should be established to process the large amount of vegetables grown in the province.
5. Steps should be taken to protect the cheese industry, now producing 100,000 tins annually. The increase in field crops is reducing the amount of land available for pasture and forage, thereby making it difficult for farmers to obtain fodder for their animals.
6. The silk industry has decreased by 70 percent in recent years and threatens to die out completely because of low prices and the uprooting of the mulberry trees.
7. Mining, as has been mentioned above, can be further developed. There are 80 known lignite deposits in the province, including 18 in Uzunkopru District and 62 in Keaan District, from which lignite is sent to Istanbul and various parts of Thrace. Freight charges are rather high because of poor roads. Consequently, the building of roads between the mines and existing highways will be necessary if production is to be increased and costs reduced.

Edirne Municipality

At present, Edirne has a population of 30,245 as compared to 150,000 before the Balkan Wars. The present population is composed largely of people who have come from surrounding villages. As a result of the shrinkage of the city, the road, water, and electrical networks are scattered and ill-suited to present-day needs. The electric generators are 23 years old, and when one of them breaks down, half the city is without light. Two large replacements have been ordered, one of which is due to arrive on 28 March 1952. 370,000 lira has been allocated to improve the electrical network. Also, 186,000 lira has been provided to improve the water system.

To improve Edirne as a touristic attraction, the Vakifs Administration is converting a historic building into a 30-room hotel, which it will turn over to the municipality. Along the same line, trees are being planted along roads, and the main streets are being repaired.

The city has a 50-bed TB hospital, a 150-bed state hospital under construction, and a dispensary operated by the Antituberculosis Society.

The city has five sport clubs with a membership in excess of 2,000.

Banking

Only the Ziraat (Agriculture) and Is (Business) Banks are active in the province; the Ottoman Bank has closed its Edirne branch for lack of business.

The Ziraat Bank branch, which provides banking facilities for the Central and Lalapasa districts is headed by Hadi Tunli, a banker with 32 years' experience. In 1951, it extended credit of one million lire for production, machinery, fuel, land purchase loans, and other credit needs. It also loaned one million lira to the 5,000 members of four cooperatives. Another 500,000 lira was loaned in the form of advances on such produce as cheese, grains, and sunflower seeds.

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The Is Bank, managed by Giyasettin Omur, provides banking facilities for Edirne and the areas of Uzunkopru, Kırklareli and Kesan.

Education

There are primary schools in 211 of the province's 266 villages; and of the province's 34,779 children of school age, 21,600 are going to school. Literacy in places where there are schools is 70 percent.

In the city of Edirne, there are 12 primary schools, a teachers' school (220 students), a lycee (405 male, 147 female students), a men's trade institute (404 students), a commercial lycee (46 males, one female), a girls' trade institute (120 students), and a girls' evening trade school. The primary schools have an enrollment of 2,823 students (1,499 boys and 1,324 girls).

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